



# Board Beat

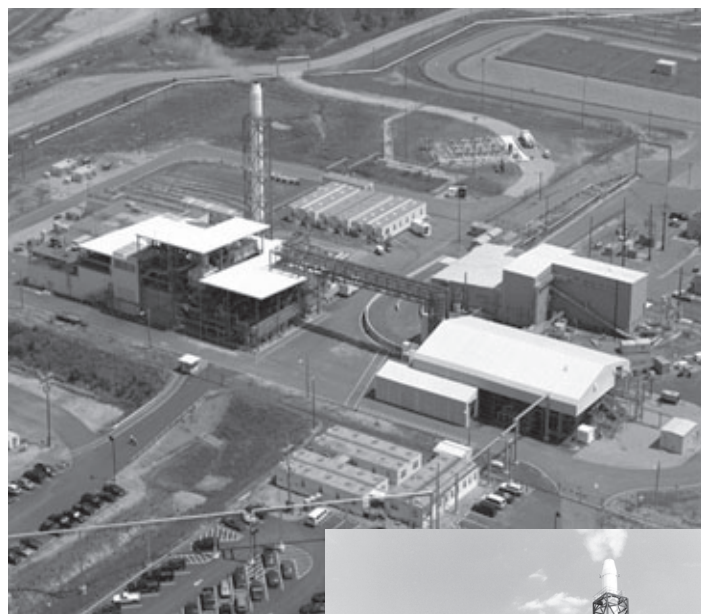


Fall 2000

## Board Examines Suspension of CIF Operations

The Consolidated Incineration Facility (CIF) was designed to treat and reduce the volume of certain incinerable hazardous, low-level radioactive and mixed (both hazardous and radioactive) wastes at SRS. Located near the center of the 310-square-mile site, the CIF reduces chemical toxicity of waste and its volume by approximately 90 percent, converting the residue to an environmentally immobile form. CIF has thus eliminated off-site shipments of incinerable hazardous wastes from the site. One of the primary functions of CIF was to incinerate benzene, a by-product to be produced by the site's Defense Waste Processing Facility (DWPF). However, because the in-tank-precipitation (ITP) process is not to be used to support DWPF, this waste never materialized. DOE has yet to make a selection of an alternative salt processing technology and one of the final alternatives being considered may again require disposal of benzene.

In March 2000, DOE informed the CAB that it was looking at suspending CIF operations due to the high cost to treat Plutonium-Uranium Extraction (PUREX) solvent and the fact that site regulatory commitments could be met with a restart of the facility in FY06. This would allow time for DOE to evaluate more cost-effective options and redirect site resources to higher priority items. Subsequent to that meeting, DOE confirmed that it was suspending operations of CIF at the end of September. Concerned by this announcement, the SRS CAB Waste Management Committee hosted a public workshop on CIF on June 5, 2000, to



*Operations were recently suspended at the Consolidated Incineration Facility (CIF) at SRS.*



better understand DOE's thinking and learn about the cost implications associated with continued operations. Attendees were informed that CIF had treated 5,330 gallons of the original 42,000 gallons of PUREX, a highly radioactive legacy waste. DOE explained that alternative technologies are currently being explored to dispose of PUREX waste in a more cost-effective manner. SRS CAB concerns remain because within the next 10 years additional PUREX will be generated by canyon operations. This additional PUREX will require disposal and CIF is a proven technology for disposing of this waste.

*continued on page 2...*

### In This Issue:

Essay Winner	2
DWPF Nears 1000 Canisters	2
Recent Recommendations Highlighted	3
Site Specific Advisory Boards Unite in Message to DOE	4
Disposal of Spent Solvent Trailer	5
Member Spotlight	6
Rocky Flats CAB to Host 2nd Stewardship Seminar	7
Speakers Bureau	7
Upcoming 2000-01 Board Meetings	8

## Board Examines CIF Suspension

... continued from page 1

The SRS CAB has consistently supported getting on with waste disposal using existing technologies and views CIF as one of the facilities at SRS that reduces the amount of legacy waste. In July 2000, the CAB recommended that DOE "reverse its decision to suspend CIF operations." The Board also requested that DOE reinstitute the necessary funds to continue operation of CIF until it can fully justify its decision and until such time as an alternative treatment option is available, is cost-effective, can be implemented, and meets all regulatory requirements. DOE responded that it has determined that suspending operations at CIF is the correct decision at this time based on several considerations; notably the current cost-effectiveness of treatment at CIF, Site Treatment Plan commitments, and the need to fund higher priority programs. DOE indicated that they regret that the decision was not discussed with the CAB in a more timely manner and they will work to ensure that this does not occur in the future.

The CAB has established a public focus group to continue following significant issues related to the suspension of CIF operations. Personnel from the site, DOE-SR and Headquarters and South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) are providing presentations in support of the focus group. The mission of the CIF Focus Group is to stay informed on the future status/operations of CIF and the review of the alternative waste treatment processes; and to participate and offer meaningful input in the decision-making. The CIF Focus Group will look at alternative technologies for PUREX, non-PUREX,

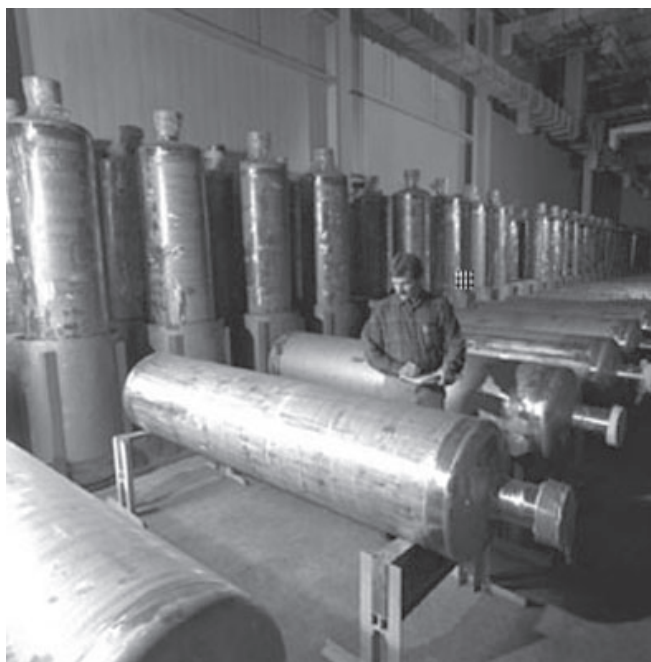
## Essay Winner

*"My role is simple ... making sure my house is beautiful inside and outside. The beautification on the outside of my house will influence others."*



**Trayon Joey Thomas** of St. Paul Academy for Boys, Savannah, Georgia, was honored on May 23, 2000, for his winning essay regarding his role in protecting the environment.

and other potential waste streams previously identified for incineration. The Focus Group is being led by Wade Waters, SRS CAB Waste Management Committee Chair, and Bill Lawless, former Chair of the Environmental Remediation and Waste Management Committee of the SRS CAB. Members of the public interested in learning more or participating in the focus group should contact the CAB office at 1-800-249-8155. ■



## DWPF Nears 1000 Canisters

The Defense Waste Processing Facility (DWPF) at SRS is on track to produce its 1000th canister by November of this year. DWPF, which safely stabilizes highly-radioactive liquid wastes into a more stable form suitable for long term storage and disposal, recently poured its 200th canister for Fiscal Year 2000. The SRS maintains



a minimum annual production goal of 200 canisters. To-date DWPF has produced over 3 million pounds of solid vitrified waste since hot operations began in March 1996. SRS plans to vitrify approximately 34 million gallons of high-level waste or 5732 canisters by 2028. ■

# Recent Recommendations Highlighted

Since the last publication of this newsletter, the following recommendations have been initiated by the SRS Citizens Advisory Board:

## **Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) Response to DOE Implementation Plan for DNFSB Recommendation 94-1/2000-1**

A recommendation that DOE go to Congress and the President to request additional funding as recommended by the DNFSB in its response to the DOE Implementation Plan for DNFSB Recommendation 94-1/2000-1. DOE submitted to Congress a request for realignment of funds in support of SRS commitments identified in the Implementation Plan. Emphasis was placed on these stabilization activities and actions have been taken to accomplish this work by the dates committed to in the plan.

## **Path Forward for Consolidated Incineration Facility (CIF)**

The Board recommended that DOE reverse its decision to suspend CIF operations. It also requested that DOE reinstitute the necessary funds to continue operation of CIF until it can fully justify its decision, and until such time that an alternative treatment option is available, cost-effective and can be implemented. DOE determined that suspending operations at CIF is the correct decision at this time, based on several considerations; notably the current cost-effectiveness of treatment at CIF, Site Treatment Plan (STP) commitments, and the need to fund higher priority programs.

## **WIPP RCRA Permit Modification-Miscertification Rate**

As noted in previous recommendations, the SRS CAB remains concerned that the RCRA Permit for the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant requires too many visual and intrusive examinations to assay containers, which are unnecessary and pose a danger to SRS workers. The SRS CAB supports requested modifications to reduce the miscertification rate from 11 percent to one percent and recommended DOE request an additional modification to have the rate reduced to its originally proposed one percent rate. The CAB is waiting resolution of this issue.

## **DWPF Canister Storage**

The SRS CAB recommended that DOE reevaluate the scope of an Environmental Assessment (EA) regarding storage of glass waste canisters for the Defense Waste Processing Facility. The Board recommends that before DOE decides on which approach (a second glass waste storage building or dry above ground storage), they reassess the EA based on general and specific CAB comments. Many of the general comments focus on an escrow account and the ability of a vendor to revert disposal responsibility back to DOE. DOE will respond in the EA.

## **Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL)**

The SRS CAB asked EPA to formally request an extension of no less than 6-10 months to a court imposed date regarding TMDLs for mercury in the Savannah River Basin. The Board asked that EPA take this time to collect analytical data from the river to formulate a site specific TMDL using this data to evaluate whether the Savannah River Basin needs to be placed on the impaired waters body list. It also asked DOE to identify which SRS outfalls meet the proposed TMDL limit without further treatment; those that will require further treatment; potential treatment technologies available and costs to comply with the proposed TMDL. A response from EPA is pending.

## **Whole Effluent Toxicity (WET) Testing Impacts on SRS Wastewater Outfalls**

Concerned that the WET Test method used for analyzing toxic pollutants in wastewater discharges may be unreliable and inaccurate, the SRS CAB requested information regarding an Alternate Species Investigation Plan and Toxicity Identification Evaluations. The Board is interested in making cost comparisons and evaluating whether a proposed alternate species would be better suited for the WET test method at SRS. DOE is providing requested updates.

## **FY 2001 Budget Deferment of Pu 2013 Stabilization Capability**

The SRS CAB recommended that DOE-Headquarters reinstate \$30.8 million in the FY2001 budget for the Pu 2013 Stabilization Capability project and fully fund the total projected costs to construct and operate the Plutonium Stabilization and Packaging System. DOE has revised its implementation plan to address DNFSB recommendations including commitment to stabilize and store plutonium to the 3013 standard. ■



# Site Specific Advisory Boards Unite in Message to DOE

The Department of Energy has utilized voluntary citizens advisory boards as one of its major mechanisms for public involvement since 1994. For the first time in almost a decade, eleven site specific advisory boards have collaborated on a statement of common values to define who they are, what they do, and their expectations of DOE and its state and federal regulators. For the past several years, these site specific advisory boards have been convening to share information and look for lessons learned from other stakeholders within the DOE complex. After several national meetings and conference calls spanning the better part of a year, the boards' chairs in consultation with the eleven boards, which comprise 220 stakeholders or stakeholder organizations nationwide, came to agreement on the following statement of common values.

## WHO WE ARE

The Department of Energy (DOE) Environmental Management (EM) Site-Specific Advisory Boards (SSABs) are composed of interested and affected stakeholders who are concerned about environmental cleanup, stabilization, disposition of radioactive and hazardous materials and waste, and long-term stewardship at the Department of Energy's (DOE) nuclear weapons and research facilities. The SSABs are chartered under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) to provide independent technical and policy advice.

- We are committed to informed and meaningful public, Tribal and stakeholder involvement in the decision-making process and policy development related to cleanup, environmental restoration, material stabilization and stewardship of DOE sites.
- We believe public and worker safety and health, the protection and remediation of the affected environment, and compliance with all legal requirements should drive cleanup and stabilization decisions and policy.

## WHAT WE DO

We provide an opportunity for open, informed, and inclusive discussion about proposed actions and decisions with DOE, EPA, state regulators, Tribes, local governments, stakeholders, and the general public. Our goal is to provide timely, informed technical and policy advice and recommendations to DOE, EPA, State regulatory agencies, or other entities, on issues relating to cleanup, environmental

*“We expect DOE and the regulators will continue to value the importance and benefit of continued public involvement...”*

restoration, closure, stewardship, nuclear material disposition, hazardous and nuclear waste management decisions, and other associated matters.

## WHAT WE EXPECT

- We expect DOE and state and federal regulators will support and encourage effective public involvement in cleanup, environmental restoration, closure, stewardship, future use, nuclear material disposition, and hazardous and nuclear waste management decisions. DOE will seek and consider advice from the public and Tribes and provide opportunities for their involvement; locally and regionally, when the decision affects one site, and nationally, when the decision affects more than one site.
- We expect DOE to ensure candid disclosure of timely, understandable, and relevant information to enable the SSABs to make informed recommendations and advice.
- We expect DOE and the regulators will continue to value the importance and benefit of continued public involvement, will respond substantively and promptly, and will give utmost consideration to environmental justice in their decision making.
- We expect DOE will honor Tribal treaties and conduct government-to-government consultation.
- We expect DOE will request funding adequate to meet or exceed legal requirements, reduce current and future risks, and in accord with values and needs of local communities.

*continued on page 7...*

# Disposal of Spent Solvent Trailer

Thanks in large measure to reviews and input from Stakeholders, the Savannah River Site (SRS) Solid Waste Division has begun disposal of low-level radioactive wastes in trenches rather than more expensive vaults. If the waste is only slightly contaminated, or can be otherwise treated to meet trench Waste Acceptance Criteria (including meeting drinking water standards in the groundwater from compliance monitoring wells), then the wastes will be disposed in trenches, resulting in significant cost savings to the taxpayer. (See Recommendation No. 94 and Commendation adopted March 28, 2000).

One innovative disposal action was completed in September 2000: disposal of a trailer that was used years ago to transfer waste solvent from the Separations Facilities (canyons) to waste storage tanks. This “spent solvent trailer” was empty of the radioactive solvent, but continued to have residual contamination on its interior surfaces. The trailer was sampled to ensure that its radioactive contamination was less than that required to meet the Waste Acceptance Criteria for disposal in a trench as a “component-in-grout.” The plan for the disposal operation was evaluated to ensure it met all safety and environmental standards.

One evaluation was a technical analysis to ensure that the trailer’s disposal was well within the limits established by the Performance Assessment (PA). The PA is an analysis that demonstrates that the planned disposal will meet DOE’s performance objectives (e.g., not exceeding drinking water standards in the groundwater) for thousands of years. The technical analysis is known as an “Unreviewed Disposal Question” evaluation. It indicates that the trailer meets the PA requirements when filled with cementitious backfill and surrounded by grout.

The actual disposal required a crane to place the trailer in the trench. The base was grouted in place, the trailer was filled with cementitious backfill, and finally the trailer was encased in grout.

This is a significant milestone for SRS's low-level waste (LLW) disposal program. It initiates safe, cost-effective, and environmentally sound disposal of large equipment at the Site and moves SRS forward to properly dispose of legacy waste materials.



A crane lowers an old solvent trailer into a trench at the E-Area storage facility.



An old solvent trailer is grouted around the body of the trailer after the interior of the tank was filled with cementitious backfill.

## SRS CAB Mission Statement

*The SRS Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) is a non-partisan group of individuals who are independent of federal, state and local government organizations as they relate to the mission of the CAB. The Board provides informed and timely recommendations to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), and the Environmental Protection Agency-Region IV (EPA), and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) concerning decisions that affect SRS in areas of environmental restoration, waste management and activities related to these functions. Two important goals of the Board are to improve two-way communication with SRS impacted communities and to ensure that stakeholders are given an opportunity to become involved in the decision-making processes of DOE, EPA, SCDHEC, and SRS management.*

# Member Spotlight



## **Sallie Connah**

Sallie is an active member of the Sierra Club and SC Coastal Conservation League and other environmental organizations. She is a former editor of Charlotte and Baltimore newspapers, and taught editing at Loyola College of Maryland and English as a Second Language to Chinese medical students at Johns Hopkins University. She is a freelance musician and a Master Gardener with the Clemson Extension. Sallie lives in Charleston, SC.



## **Perry Holcomb**

Perry is an SRS retiree with experience in environmental restoration and is a recognized expert in radiochemistry. He retired from a 36-year career at SRS, where he held various assignments, primarily at the Savannah River Technology Center, Separations Technology, and Environmental Restoration Divisions. Perry holds a B.S. in Chemistry and an M.S. and Ph.D. in Analytical Chemistry. Since retirement, he has served as an independent consultant to various SRS subcontractors. Perry lives in North Augusta, SC.



## **William Lawrence**

William is a former Chief Steward Metropolitan Police and appointed member of the Aiken County Human Relations Commission. He is also a member of the Carolina Alliance for Fair Employment State Board Executive Committee. William holds a B.S. from Voorhees College and resides in Aiken, SC.



## **Jean Sulc**

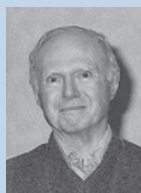
Jean holds a Masters in Urban & Regional Planning with an emphasis in land use. She has worked with two Colorado communities in developing local plans and had a 15-year career as an energy

issues advocate for a US oil and gas company, where she devised and assisted in congressional communications for her client. Jean has also worked as a grantee to the US EPA Ombudsman. She is a member of the Greater Beaufort Chamber of Commerce and the National Panel of Consumer Arbitrators and resides in St. Helena Island, SC.



## **Carolyn Williams**

Carolyn is the Assistant Superintendent of The Barnwell School District. She is a member of the SC State School Board and Director of the Barnwell County Chamber of Commerce. Carolyn holds a B.S. in Elementary Education and a Master of Guidance/Counseling. She also holds an Educational Specialist Degree in Administration & Finance. Carolyn lives in Barnwell, SC.



## **William Willoughby**

Bill retired in 1993 from his position as a project manager and consulting engineer with Stone & Webster Engineering Corporation in New York, NY. He has held various positions in nuclear engineering and has extensive experience in nuclear plant engineering, operations support, evaluation and licensing for both nuclear and fossil plants. He holds a B.S. in Chemical Engineering from MIT, Cambridge, and an M.A. and an M.S. in Nuclear Engineering from the University of California at Berkeley. Bill lives in Columbia, SC. ■

Check out our website at  
<http://sro/index.html>  
for the latest news regarding the  
SRS Citizens Advisory Board!



# Rocky Flats CAB to Host 2nd Stewardship Seminar



On October 25-27, 2000, stakeholders from around the country will gather in Denver, Colorado, to discuss the current state of long-term stewardship at DOE sites and those actions most important for DOE to pursue in the near future.

Last fall, 100 participants gathered in Oak Ridge, Tennessee and developed 10 next steps for stewardship. All agreed that DOE, in cooperation with its stakeholders, must provide direction, funding, and technical support for implementation of these actions, which included development of a national policy, establishment of a legal mandate for funding separate from remediation funding,

and development of guidance for site-specific stewardship plans.

Hosted by the Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board, the 2000 Stewardship Seminar will include presentations from DOE-Headquarters, site specific presentations from each board, and core topic breakout sessions. SRS CAB representatives will include P.K. Smith, Beckie Dawson, Jean Sulc, Wade Waters, and Mike Schoener. Look for more information as the SRS CAB becomes involved in stewardship issues later this fall. ■

## SSABs Unite in Message

... continued from page 4

■ We expect that DOE will protect the public, workers and the environment.

### WE ALSO EXPECT

■ Decisions to be protective of human health and the environment and based upon:

- a full assessment of human health and environmental risks;
- a full evaluation of all life cycle costs;
- at a minimum, full compliance with all legal requirements;
- scientific and technical considerations;
- community desires; and
- cultural values.

■ Cleanup/environmental restoration/closure/stewardship and nuclear materials management decisions to ensure the health and safety of present and future generations and protection of the natural environment.

■ The Federal government commit to providing adequate funding for the proper cleanup and long-term stewardship of DOE nuclear weapons production and research facilities.

■ Complex-wide coordination and the full integration of all sites in planning nuclear materials stabilization, cleanup, environmental restoration, waste management (storage, treatment, and disposition), and transportation activities.

The above common values were provided to the DOE Secretary, EM Assistant Secretary, field managers and regulators of the various DOE sites under a cover letter signed by all EM SSAB Chairpersons. "We present these Common Values to you with the hope that they become innate, essential principles in your planning and decision making related to cleanup and long-term stewardship at DOE's nuclear weapons and research facilities," the letter stated. ■

**Would you like to learn more about what's going on at the Savannah River Site and how it may affect you and your family?**

***The SRS Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) is available to provide:***

- A speaker to come tell your organization about SRS and how citizens can become involved***
- A short video about the SRS CAB and its activities***
- A display at your next Expo or Fair***

**For more information call  
1-800-249-8155**



## Upcoming 2000-01 Board Meetings

November 13-14	N. Augusta Community Center	North Augusta, SC
January 22-23 (Full)	Location TBD	Hilton Head, SC
February 27 (Combined)	Location TBD	Augusta, GA
April 23-24 (Full)	Location TBD	North Augusta, SC
May 22 (Combined)	Location TBD	Savannah, GA
July 23-24 (Full)	Location TBD	Columbia, SC
August 28 (Combined)	Location TBD	Barnwell, SC
October 22-23 (Full)	Location TBD	Augusta, GA
November 13 (Combined)	Location TBD	Charleston, SC

NOTE: Individual committee meetings will be held on off months as required.



***Key criteria for Board membership includes a time commitment, and the desire and ability to work towards better and informed recommendations. To apply for membership to the Citizens Advisory Board, please call 1-800-249-8155***

"Board Beat" is published semiannually by the Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board. Content is provided by Board members and support staff. Please send your comments and suggestions to:

Dawn Haygood

SRS Citizens Advisory Board

Building 742-A, Room 190

Aiken, S.C.

Phone: 1-800-249-8155

Fax: (803)725-8057

e-mail: dawn.haygood@srs.gov

### Mailing List

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

email Address \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Add my name to mail list  
☐ Remove my name from mail list  
☐ Correct my address

#### Mailto:

Savannah River Site

Citizens Advisory Board

Building 742-A, Room 190

Aiken, SC 29808

Savannah River Site

### ***Citizens Advisory Board***

Building 742-A, Room 190

Aiken, SC 29808